

Recess Podcast Script

How useful is recess? Besides it taking away time from reading and writing lessons, do teachers really need to give up precious teaching time for kids to be goofing around? The answer is obvious... YES.

WHAT HAPPENED TO RECESS?

Recess is a crucial part of the school day. It not only gives students a break from sitting at their desks or tables but it also gives them a chance to socialize in a less structured atmosphere.

The problems that teachers are facing come from a constantly increasing curriculum load with no additional time to cover new materials. Because of No Child Left Behind, teachers must have each of their students prepared to meet their rigorous state standards. In order to accomplish these additional requirements within the same hourly school year, time must be taken away from other, "less important" areas.

Did No Child Left Behind erase recess from the school day?

It is already difficult for teachers to find enough time to cover everything in the curriculum while also incorporating other fun non-curriculum lesson enhancers. With music and arts being cut even despite parent's disapproval, it's no wonder that something as "useless" as recess gets cut almost immediately.

It is easy to imagine that this removal of recess is inconsequential to a scholastic environment, but consider the following. Many workplaces allow their employees to have a 15 minute break along with their lunch break. This not only allows the employee to get up out of their desk chair and move or relax from a busy sales floor but it also recharges the employees. When you are sitting at a desk looking at a computer screen for several hours, your production level begins to fade. Employers would rather have their employees take a fifteen minute break and recharge themselves so that as they come back to their desks they are more energized resulting in a higher productivity level. The same theory holds true for children in a classroom.

What are the benefits of recess?

Recess allows students to take a break from structured lessons to do something more free and impulsive. This allows them to take their minds off of what is occurring throughout the day and do something active, creative, and social.

Recess can range from going to playground or gym, playing a classroom games or small group games, or even creating activity centers around the room--anything to get them out of their seats, moving around, and recharging their batteries.

Other benefits of recess can be found in the opportunities for social development it provides. Recess allows students to interact with each other, creating social skills that they need to be successful in their futures. To truly be a fully functioning member of society, a person has to be able to do more than just memorize multiplication tables and recite the presidents. They must be able to communicate with their peers about what they are learning, feel comfortable expressing their opinions, and develop pride and self esteem through peer connections. These abilities are much easier to master from the comforts of the monkey bars than in a confined classroom setting.

Recess also aids in developing lifelong lessons such as respect, conflict resolution, working with others, and problem solving. Many students go through a lot of stress throughout the school day and into their home lives. Being able to relax and play with friends can help anxiety and stress levels decrease. Helping students to find ways to handle stress in a more productive way.

It also has a major role in fighting against childhood obesity. Any amount of running around or movement is better than none. Many children, specifically in public schools located in low income neighborhoods don't always have the opportunity to play outside when they go home after school. They may also have limited interactions between other children who live in their neighborhood. School is the only safe opportunity where they can interact with other children and get exercise.

A survey was taken by teachers who offered at least fifteen minutes of recess a week and was compared to a survey by teachers who did not offer any recess.

Those who offered recess found that there were less behavioral problems after their students had the free time. This is very beneficial to teachers; not only does this help with keeping on schedule which helps accomplish more but it gives other students the chance in having lessons be uninterrupted by behavioral situations.

Is it important that we push our students to their full potential? Of course. Is it important that our students receive enough education to meet their state requirements? Without a doubt. But is eliminating recess from our schools the way to do it? Absolutely not. Giving our students recess is beneficial to all. Administrators and teachers need to come together and create time for this. There is not harm done in giving at least a fifteen minute break if the results mean better learning and more productivity.